

103(a) as being unpatentable over Demarco. Claims 3, 4, 6, 14, and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Demarco in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,302,098 to Smith.

The undersigned spoke to Examiner Ho by telephone on June 13 and June 16, 2003, and discussed proposed claim language to overcome the above rejections. In the phone conversations, Examiner Ho preliminarily agreed that the claims as amended herein appeared patentable over the art of record.

Applicants respectfully submit that the claims are patentable and requests allowance thereof.

Should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference would expedite issuance of the application, the Examiner is respectfully invited to telephone the undersigned at 202/861-1792.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachment – Appendix

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Appendix – Marked-up Version of the Claims

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Twice Amended) An apparatus for latching a door against a frame, comprising;

a door pin extending from the door;

a handle lever rotatably mounted to the door and having a handle pin

extending therefrom;

and

a latch bar mounted for reciprocating travel relative to the frame, the latch bar completely defining a first slot configured to reciprocate substantially linearly and a cam surface adapted to receive said door pin, and a second slot adapted to receive said handle pin;

wherein said latch bar and handle have a first unlatched position where said handle pin enters said second slot and said door pin enters said first slot, and a second latched position where said handle pin contacts said second slot and said cam surface bears against said door pin, and

wherein rotation of said handle from the first position to the second position causes said handle pin to bear against said second slot, moving said latch bar in a latching direction from the first position to the second position, so that said first slot on said cam surface bears against said door pin and urges the door in a closing direction.

12. (Amended) An apparatus for latching a door against a frame, comprising:

a first engagement means extending from the door;

a second engagement means mounted to the door frame including a slot configured to move substantially linearly and cooperating with said first engagement means, said first and second engagement means movable between a first position where the door is unlatched and a second position where said engagement means latches the door closed; and actuating means for actuating the second engagement means to move between the first and second positions, the actuating means including a rotating handle having a handle pin extending therefrom that contacts a slot movable with the second engagement means to move the second engagement means from the first to the second position when the handle is rotated.

16. (Twice Amended) A method for latching a door against a frame, comprising the steps of:

inserting a door pin mounted to the door into a first slot completely defined by a latch bar mounted to the frame;

inserting a handle pin mounted to a handle into a second slot on the latch bar; and

rotating the handle in a first direction so that the door pin urges the latch bar in a first direction so that the first slot moves substantially linearly and cammingly contacts the door pin to urge the door into a latched position.